

CITY OF COVINGTON
Planning Commission Minutes

July 17, 2014

City Hall Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Smith called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:35 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ed Holmes, Jennifer Gilbert-Smith, Bill Judd, Paul Max, Sean Smith and Alex White

MEMBERS ABSENT – Jim Langehough

STAFF PRESENT

Angie Feser, Parks Planner
Richard Hart, Community Development Director
Ann Mueller, Senior Planner
Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The record is noted to reflect that the June 19, 2014 meeting was not held due to lack of a quorum.

Commissioner Holmes requested a section of the minutes be restated to more accurately reflect his thoughts regarding the selection of the city's consultants.

- **1. Vice Chair Max moved and Commissioner Holmes seconded to approve the corrected May 1, 2014 minutes and consent agenda. Motion carried 6-0.**

CITIZEN COMMENTS – None

PUBLIC HEARING

2. 2014 Docketed Comprehensive Plan Amendments for the Parks & Recreation Element and Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Chair Smith opened the Public Hearing.

Parks Planner Angie Feser provided background information to the Planning Commission on the need for updates to the Park and Recreation Element and the Capital Facilities Plan Element. The memorandum labeled "Agenda Item 2" in the packet outlines the specific proposed changes and staff findings.

Chair Smith asked about some of the changes to the Park and Recreation Facilities map. Staff also discussed existing trails, bikeways, paths and the system gaps.

Chair Smith closed the Public Hearing.

Community Development Director Richard Hart explained the process of the six-year Capital Improvement Project plan including funding projects and how the document can change from year to year.

- **Commissioner White moved and Commissioner Gilbert-Smith seconded to recommend to the City Council that the 2014 Docket of Comprehensive Plan amendments be adopted. Motion carried 6-0.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No action required

3. Discussion of Council Policy Direction on Sign Code Amendments

Mr. Hart explained the difficulty of sign code changes due to recent litigation. Staff is proceeding with proposed changes based on current law. The City Council had to decide how to address commercial, non-commercial, local government, on premises and off premises.

Commissioner Judd asked for examples of jurisdictions of where the sign code model is working. Mr. Hart responded that the landscape is constantly changing with case law. There are inconsistencies with local sign regulations that do not withstand the legal test. There is difficulty enforcing sign code regulations and managing sign clutter. Covington is seeing the use of illegal "A" frame signs and are awaiting the City Council's direction.

Chair Smith added that if this is done correctly, citizens will notice the difference in signage that makes the city stand out visually.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Presentation on Town Center Project for Suwanee, Georgia

Mr. Hart reminded the Planning Commission that Monday night from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., there is an opportunity to attend a video conference with staff from Suwanee, Georgia. Over the last 10 years, the city has developed a successful town center which includes a large community park. Suwanee is a suburban city with similar demographics, family oriented, and recreation and schools are very important.

ATTENDANCE VOTE

Jim Langehough was not in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

Senior Planner Ann Mueller shared that the city's consultants would be conducting a storefront studio asking for feedback from the community from July 21st through July 24th.

ADJOURN

The July 17, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary